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ALEX. H. JONES,

MEMBER-ELECT TO CONGRESS:

HIS COURSE

BEFORE THE WAR, DURING THE WAR,

AND

AFTER THE WAR.

ADVENTURES AND ESCAPES.

WASHINGTON:
McGILL & WITHEROW, PRINTERS AND STEREOTYPERS.
1866.

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TO THE PEOPLE.

In conformity to promises, made at the solicitation of many, I now proceed to the narration of my course before, during and since the war, &c.

I was born and brought up near Asheville, Buncombe county, North Carolina, where I received the rudiments of an education in literature and practical farming, and where in my youth I read the life of Washington, Marion, Putnam, and the history of the United States. In a word, I was taught to love the Union next to my God. In my seventeenth year, by the consent of my father, I volunteered into the service of the United States, under the supervision of General Winfield Scott, and was honorably discharged at the pleasure of the Government. In my twenty-second year I married and settled on a farm, where, from exposure and hard labor, I became seriously afflicted with rheumatism, and was advised by my physician to change my occupation. In the year 1851 I removed to Hendersonville, where I engaged in the mercantile business, and continued up to the war; having never taken any active part in politics until the year 1860, and then it was more accidental than intentional.

Having become an administrator of an editor, it devolved upon me to fill out the unexpired time as editor. In principle I was a Whig. Exchange papers from almost every State in the Union kept me posted in the political world, and I endeavored to give the people the benefit of the great arguments in favor of the Union. My editorials were determined and uncompromising. I was dubbed by the disorganizers an abolitionist, a Tory, a Lincolnite, &c. The postmasters in South Carolina and some sections in North Carolina refused to distribute the paper, calling it a d—d abolition sheet. Finally the administrative term of the paper closed, but not without making its mark in western North Carolina, as the sequel will show.

The year 1861 having arrived—and South Carolina had passed the so-called ordinance of secession—and treason now making some headway in North Carolina, an election was called. The Union party of the western portion of the State organized and went almost unanimously against a convention. In this election I took quite an active part in my locality. Over-rejoiced at the success, and hoping the question was set at rest so far as North Carolina was concerned, I gave vent to my feelings in loud expressions of praise to the western portion of the State—so much so that I was marked as a Union leader. In the meantime President Lincoln issued his proclamation, calling on the loyal States for troops to put down the rebellion; and Governor Ellis, instead of furnishing his quota of men, replied to the President: "You cannot get a single man; but North Carolina will furnish forty thousand for the South," &c. Volunteer companies were formed throughout the State, and every thing done in order to excite the people to the highest point. Meetings were held in the various counties, in which men who had claimed to be Union men participated with the original secessionists in passing resolutions "that the time had arrived when the South should be a unit in repelling the usurpations of Lincoln," &c. Rebel flags were being hoisted and defended by the excited volunteer youth of the country. Never shall I forget the time when, in my native little village, a long flag-pole was dragged by my office door well guarded, for the reason it required a force to hoist a rebel flag in that place. The attempt had been made and failed on one occasion previous to this.

I was a quiet looker-on, for I could do nothing more, to use the language of another, than to think to myself, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do."

Orders for a second election were made and reached the western portion of the State; or, at least, were made public only some four or five days previous to the day of election. This was fatal to the Union men. But few were to be found now who would face the music and become a candidate in favor of the Union. My name was announced by the "straight" Union men of the district. My opponent was the same that had run on the Union ticket at the previous election, and was elected by an overwhelming majority over the secession candidate; but he too had gone over to the rebels, and carried all of his friends who had not moral courage enough to *stick* to the Union.

In attempting to make the first political speech of my

life, I soon found for what purpose the volunteer companies were raised. I had not proceeded far with my speech until I was invited from the stump and threatened with a ride on one of Lincoln's rails. The second day following, the pretended election came off. Clerks were at the ballot-boxes with pencil and paper in hand, taking down all the names of those who voted for me, ("the Lincoln" candidate,) with threats that all such would be hung or shot. At some precincts the polls were guarded, and those who dared to vote for me were mobbed. Never were such scenes enacted in the mountains of western North Carolina on any previous occasion; guns, pistols, knives, stones, and every means possible, were used to prevent the people of western North Carolina from showing by their votes that they were a loyal and Union-loving people. On the one side boys not more than fifteen and sixteen years of age were allowed a vote, whilst Union men stood aghast.

Notwithstanding so many illegal votes were allowed to be cast in favor of secession, the State fell short something over forty-six thousand votes, according to previous elections. This fall-off was principally in the western part of the State, and this is another evidence that the majority of the people in the mountain counties are, and have always been, true to the Union. But the convention met and declared the State out of the Union, and it was as much as a Union man's life was worth to openly advocate the cause. Something must be done, and I was looked upon as the Union leader in my section, and was applied to by hundreds for counsel. I had to proceed with much caution, for some were constantly going over and affiliating with the rebels, and it seemed to me the very moment they went over their hearts became corrupted. With the aid of my younger brother, who was as true a man as ever saw the light of day, and some others, we formed a secret Union league, with certain signs and tokens by which we could recognize each other, even if we were strangers. My brother and myself having relatives in East Tennessee, we arranged a kind of "under-ground railroad" by which we could communicate; and acted in accordance to the circumstances that surrounded us, watching and waiting, hoping that East Tennessee would be relieved by the presence of Federal troops. Conscription would occasionally make an inroad upon us, and this was evaded in every manner possible. Early in the spring of 1863, my brother was notified to appear before the conscript board; he notified me of the fact, and said he thought he would get off

on the ground of inability. Indeed he was quite a delicate man, but I told him no man of his sentiments would be excused. Said he, "you know our solemn vows never to fight against the Union." I told him that I did, and I did not intend to break my vow at any hazard. We had solemnly pledged each other that we would sacrifice all that we possessed on earth, and our lives, sooner than be forced to fight against our conscientious principles. He went before the board with a certificate of inability, but all to no purpose; he was notified to appear for duty. Never shall I forget our next meeting and parting, poor fellow, with a wife and six little children whom he dearly loved. On parting from me in the road, said he, "I am going to keep my pledge. I am going to Tennessee, and I doubt whether we shall ever meet again in this world, my health being feeble, but I will do what I conceive to be my duty before God." After some conditional arrangements, we bid adieu. Never, never will I forget that last look of my dear devoted brother. From the period of my brother's departure, I was suspicioned and watched closer than ever. My friends would not confer with me, only in a private way, for fear of condemnation and suspicion, and I was frequently warned by them that my life was in danger. I had written several articles over fictitious signatures, with which I was strongly suspicioned, against the rebellion and certain characters advocating the same; finally, I wrote a long article preparing the minds of the party for the designs that I intended carrying out, and had some six hundred copies printed secretly, which was carefully distributed into the hands of those for whom they were intended. The article is here copied, leaving off the extraneous:

"Multum in Parvo."

"We were once a happy people; yea, happy and blessed. Let us pass our minds back, and reflect a while on by-gone days, to our childhood. Do you remember that old school-house trail, once so familiar? Do you not in your mind hear the warble of those sweet birds on your way to and fro? Do you not remember those sweet faces, those happy school-mates? Don't you recollect, when returning home, the cheerful song and whistle of the plowman? Cast your eye down to yonder meadow, hill-side, or some other place, and near by don't you see that milk maid, perhaps your sister? Don't you hear that sweet happy voice, as she mingles her

tuneful powers with those around to add to the happiness of your peaceful home? Don't you see your brothers, your father, as the case may be, coming from the farm, the shop, or the counting-room? What cheerful faces! Perhaps they are tired and care-worn; but they are cheerful; I can see a fixedness in their countenances, looking to the future paving out a way for our comfort and welfare. We take a little larger scope, and see yonder our good neighbor enlarging his farm; another building a new house; over the way a little, our neighbors are engaged in erecting a neat church or school house; in one direction and in another lives an uncle or cousin, or neighbor so-and-so; some of them are wealthy and prosperous. Let us still enlarge our view, and go from county to county, from State to State, and happiness and prosperity meet us every where throughout our broad land; and with all how free we were to visit and associate throughout the whole boundary of the United States and Territories. No wonder we prospered as a nation. No wonder that we prided ourselves in the best government 'the world ever saw.'

"Alas, civil war is stalking abroad in this our beloved country. Devastation, misery, and confusion have come upon us, and we must face the fact.

"The writer will deal in facts, and proceed at once to call the attention of the reader to the war in which we are now involved, and will first speak of the cause, &c.

"The first cause of this great national strife originated with men and measures that were unfriendly to republicanism; that were opposed to a democratic form of government. Don't be startled until you examine the evidence and facts brought forth; that will prove beyond a doubt what is here asserted. It is useless to carry the mind back to the Revolution, in order to prove that there was a revolution; but perhaps it is necessary to call to mind that there was a *cause*, and a *just* cause, for the Revolution of our fathers; and I can only refer the reader to the Declaration of Independence for those just reasons for throwing off the yoke of bondage.

"It is well known to all Americans that in the struggle of our fathers for independence, that there were Tories; men who were opposed to American independence; many, perhaps, were honest in regard to their preference for the king and the rule of the mother country.

"South Carolina by far held more of these Tories than any other State, and in the adoption of the Articles of Confederation her convention tied on the vote—one half for

King George; but finally with great reluctance this State pledged her faith to the United States, and became a prosperous and wealthy State; but the seeds of disaffection were not lost. In 1832 she attempted to nullify the Constitution, but the taint had not got sufficient hold on the masses of the people; it was plain, open rebellion, and we had a President who knew how to deal with traitors; his watch-word was, 'This Union shall be maintained at all hazards.'

"The disapprobation of the people and the promptness of the Administration gave nullification such a rebuke, that it dared never again to appear until it assumed the false colors of secession coupled with States rights. The spirit of rebellion was kept animated and fed by circumstances as they occurred, and the fire eaters of the South labored hard to prejudice the minds of the people. The press, instead of trying to bind up, were sowing the seeds of strife by making appeals to the people not to read northern papers, not to read northern literature; in short everything that could be, was done to alienate the sections.

"The Missouri compromise line having been obliterated by Congress, and opened a road for the disunionists, on which they traveled quite successfully, with the aid of James Buchanan, in the Kansas affair. It was during President Buchanan's term that the disorganizers added to their former corruptions the plans through which to disrupt the Government, and he (Buchanan) was either wilfully corrupt, or so weak that he would or could not discharge the sworn duties of his office. It was during this Administration that it became necessary to hold the noted Covode investigation, which filled quite a large volume, and which but few men South ever saw. It was during this term Secretary Floyd had the Government arms removed south, thereby endeavoring to rob the Government of the means to maintain itself in case of an out-break at the South, which was intended and which said Secretary Floyd was known to. It was during this term that a secret organization was formed, its object being to overthrow the Government. It was during this memorable Administration that members of Congress, governors of States, and many other office-holders, could violate a sacred oath which was taken to maintain the Constitution of the United States. It was during this term that the noted Charleston Democratic Convention was held, in which that patriotic statesman, Steven A. Douglas, was sacrificed, and arrangements made by which three candidates were placed in the field from the South, so as to make sure the election

of the Republican candidate, and thereby make a pretext to fire the hearts of the southern people. The secession party, or wing of this convention, did not go there with the intention of being governed by the majority. They went there with treachery in their hearts; treacherous to their party; traitors to the Government; treacherous to the principles of liberty. This minority draws off, or as they say, seceded, and meets in Baltimore, and nominates Mr. Breckinridge, having no doubt a previous understanding with him that he would accept the nomination. The secessionists now had things just as they desired so far, for they well knew that the Republican party would have their candidate, and would be almost certain to carry the election according to the provisions of the Constitution. Now I here make the assertion, and no intelligent mind can help being convinced of its truth, that this very influence, used by the secession party knowingly, purposely and premeditatedly, aided in the election of Mr. Lincoln. Surely they should have given him a fair trial after being instrumental in electing him the constitutional and lawful president of the United States. In view of these facts, the Union men of western North Carolina pledged themselves, if Mr. Lincoln was elected, they would sustain him. His election was announced, and immediately the howl came up from all the cotton regions, '*nigger*, *nigger*, *nigger*,' as though the salvation of the whole world depended upon the negro and slavery.

"The period for inauguration arrives; Mr. Lincoln takes the oath and issues his address to the people, expressing hopes for peace and quiet, declaring his intention to administer the Government according to the Constitution, and disavowing any intention of interfering with the institutions of any of the States, &c.

"In the face of all this, petulant South Carolina strikes the fatal blow to slavery by firing into the flag of her country. This step forced the President, according to the oath that he had taken, to take measures to put down the rebellion and protect the Government property.

"The cry of the secessionists at this juncture was 'no coercion, no coercion,' and plying the question to Union men, 'If North Carolina is called upon for men, are you going to fight for Lincoln or for the South?' and very many committed themselves one way or the other before they knew what they were doing.

"Time passed on and North Carolina, about the last State, was declared out of the Union; and how has she been

dragged out? Fellow-citizens of the free and blue mountains of western North Carolina follow me, and I will lay the truth naked before you, and you will be the witnesses to the facts.

"At the first election, we of the western portion of the State voted secession down by an overwhelming majority, which carried the State by a large majority. After which armies were raised; vigilant committees appointed throughout the country; a system of espionage kept up; the post offices and mails usurped; some barn, stable, or other old house has been fired; the howl is raised; some poor, friendless Union man perhaps arraigned, and rumors of the most startling character on the wing. In the meantime certain characters were going through the country preaching that cotton was king; that the Yankees were a nation of thieves, and would seize our lands, ravish our wives and daughters. We were told that one southern man could whip five Yankees; that they were a set of cowards. We were told that secession would be peaceable; and certain of these characters said they would drink all the blood that was spilt, or wipe it up with their pocket handkerchiefs. The last was a promise made by Jeff. Davis in a speech made at Memphis, Tennessee. Peaceable secession and reconstruction were the great arguments used in western North Carolina with the non-slaveholders. There was policy in this, there being but comparatively few slaveholders in the mountain district. The argument used with the slaveholders was 'eternal separation;' an independent government, with slavery for its chief corner-stone.

"The mouths of the Union men now almost completely gagged; an election was ordered the second time—only a few days' notice, and no discussion allowed. Thus doubly prepared, the farce of an election was held, and notwithstanding the result was heralded forth as a great triumph, there was but little over half the usual vote of the State, while thousands of illegal votes were cast.

"The politicians had now almost become fully initiated, particularly the democratic party, into this damnable heresy of secession. The rebel leaders at Washington, one after another, came home much better prepared to carry out their villainous purposes. They know how to work the wires, for they have been practicing for these many years. They had excited the people on the slave question in Congress and at home, in order to prepare them for secession, and taught the people that they were imposed upon by unequal tariffs,

and that separation was the only hope for their *salvation;* disgraced themselves by an effort to mob their superiors within the halls of the Capitol. The fact is, these fire-eaters went there with treason in their hearts. It was a settled and fixed policy with them to disrupt the Government they had corrupted, and were acting in the capacity of spies and traitors at the same time, with the hope that the Union would be divided peaceably, as they had persuaded the people would be done if they would secede.

"The rebellion has been going on nearly two years, and we are told that England will soon raise the blockade; that France would soon acknowledge the independence of the South; while many openly avow that they would prefer to live under the crown of England or France, rather than be united with the North again; that republican governments had proved a failure, &c. This unveils the real objects of these would-be tyrants. Rise, dust of Washington, Marion and Jackson, and rebuke the traitors!

"See Life of General Francis Marion, pp. 245–246:

"'In short, my dear sir, men will always fight for their government according to their sense of its value. To value it aright they must understand it; they cannot do without education, and a large portion of the citizens are poor, and can never attain that inestimable blessing without the aid of Government; it is plainly the first duty of Government to bestow it freely upon them; and the more perfect the government the greater the duty to make it known. Selfish and oppressive governments, indeed, as Christ observes, must "hate the light and fear to come to it, because their deeds are evil." But a fair and cheap government like our Republic, "longs for the light and rejoices to come to the light, that it may be manifested of God," and well worth all the vigilance and valor that an enlightened nation can rally for its defence. And God knows a good government can hardly ever be half anxious enough to give its citizens a thorough knowledge of its own excellences. For as some of the most valuable truths for lack of careful promulgation have been lost, so the best governments on earth, if not duly known and prized, may be subverted. Ambitious demagogues will rise, and the people, *through ignorance* and love *of change*, will follow them; vast armies will be formed and bloody battles fought, and after desolating their country with all the horrors of civil war, the *guilty* survivors will have to bend their necks to the iron yoke of some stern

usurper, and like beasts of burden drag unpitied those galling chains which they have riveted upon themselves forever.'

"If it were possible for the instigators to succeed in this rebellion, and become separate and independent of the North, another revolution would follow just as certain as night follows day. The existence of the principle of liberty and of equal rights is 'inalienable and inherent in the very nature of man, and therefore can no more be destroyed than hunger or love;' that a purely republican form of government is the only one adapted to the nature of man, and the only one calculated to secure universal satisfaction and happiness, and the subjugation of man by his fellow-man is an open violation of the principles of human nature. If the leaders who were the cause of our national troubles had only proceeded upon this principle, subjugation and suffering in its many forms in our land, would not now have existed. By creating every man free to choose or refuse good and evil, God allows every man to govern himself, and surely then *men* ought to allow *one another* to govern themselves; subject, however, to the constitution and laws of their country, as they are to the law of God 'rewarded according to their deeds.' There is no danger that this principle will ever be extinguished; but in case the subjugation and servitude of man, in any form, should be carried to a very great length, there is danger, indeed a moral certainty, of a revolution; and a revolution too, violent in proportion to the means that may bring it about. 'Slowly but surely, as if it were in the insinuating yet resistless folds of the boa constrictor, is this serpentine aristocracy subduing and subjugating by piece-meal the *virtuous* and the *talented* poor of our country.' But there is scarcely a possibility of a despotic form of government in this country. No, thanks to the great Author of our being, man's nature is unalterable; the spirit of seventy-six and the love of LIBERTY *will live* and will *increase*, and woe be to the man or set of men that ride over it. The great doctrine of human rights, of liberty, of free government, of 'INDEPENDENCE,' will live and spread, and root up and trample down every vestige of tyranny, of *aristocracy* and forcible servitude.

"To-day, if all restraint were thrown off and the people of western North Carolina could have an untrammeled vote, they would cast a large majority for the Union of our fathers, notwithstanding the false assertions daily sent out that the South is a unit. Maryland, (*My Maryland*,) Kentucky, Missouri, northern Virginia, East Tennessee, and western

North Carolina, these States and parts of States have not suffered themselves, as strong as the current is, to be altogether drawn into this *maelstrom* of secession. Add the mountain portions of Georgia and Alabama which were coerced by those non-coercionists to that portion just named, and let us make the contrast between these and the remaining portions of the South. The first named had a better system of general education; more equality in society; more general intelligence and common practical sense; fewer very wealthy, but more frank, open and honest men, as a general thing better posted in governmental affairs; better acquainted with ethics and less with etiquette. It is clear that the South is divided within herself. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.'

"There are now thousands who have been forced into the army, who do not believe the cause of the South is just any more than myself, and thousands more if the veil of disguise was thrown off would be of the same opinion. 'Oh! but,' says one, 'if the Constitution had been carried out, we would not fight at all;' but every body ought to know the rebellion was got up on the false pretext that Mr. Lincoln was going to violate it; and all should know if the instigators had loved the Constitution better than secession, even had it been violated, they would have fought for it. The fact stares every one in the face, that treason began before Mr. Lincoln had any power, had he desired such a thing, and that these cotton lords of creation, who own fifty, a hundred, or perhaps five hundred slaves, look upon a white man who has to labor for an honest living as no better than one of their negroes. Hence such epithets as 'old Abe, the rail splitter,' &c., as though splitting rails was a disgrace, and as though some of the best men that ever graced the halls of the Capitol had not split rails. But says one, 'this aristocracy possess much learning and are highly educated.' True, many of them are. But what is education without common sense and *justice*. The fact is, these *bombastic*, *highfalutin*, aristocratic fools have been in the habit of driving negroes and poor helpless white people until they think they can control the world of mankind. This nature is bred in them, and they are taught to think that cotton is king; that they themselves are superior; to hate, deride and suspicion the poor. This is education perverted. The people of South Carolina boast that they are wealthier according to white population than any other State. If so, what does it consist of? And if she has been more prosperous and gained more wealth than any of the

other States, wherein did the Government oppress her more than others? and why was she, above all others, for breaking up and destroying the very Government under whose fostering care she had obtained this wealth? Simply because she imbibed the false teachings of Calhoun, and here is the bottom of the whole thing. It was well said, 'let Calhoun take a pinch of snuff and the whole State would sneeze.' The South has thrown off the best guarantee she will ever have again for the protection of slavery—the Constitution and the Union—mark the prediction! This rebellion has done the cause of slavery more injury than any thing else could have done. It is causing the non-slaveholder of the South to think. Men have brains and they will act.

"What has been and is to be gained by continuing the rebellion? Thousands of suffering widows and orphans friendless, except their God; millions of confederate notes and shinplasters which 'promise to pay,' which secessionists can refuse with impunity, but which Union men must take or be mobbed; a host of speculators who would steal the 'pewter off of a dead negro's cane;' a mock government through conscription; a country going to waste as fast as time can move; large armies and brave men, but a bad cause; a host of politicians and smart men, and but few statesmen and honest ones; gags for the mouths of our wisest and best men; brambles and briers where corn ought to grow; a mock Congress to pass conscript, tythe, and other odious laws, and military detailed mobs to enforce them; military officers who shoot boys and hang and whip women without trial; more lunatics than our asylums will hold. What else? Fort Sumter, and treason by firing upon it; a different flag from the one our fathers fought under; millions of enemies who were once friends. And now what has the South lost? The respect of the civilized world; thousands of her deluded young men; commercial intercourse with the nations of the earth; a good and reliable currency; and we have well nigh lost our liberties; but thanks to God we have not lost the love of liberty, nor the principles of a free and republican government. 'But,' says some *sprig*, 'liberty is what we are fighting for.' Liberty to do what? '*Why the liberty of peaceable secession.*' The devil had the liberty to secede, but he had to take quarters in a different clime, no doubt where the most of the instigators of this suicidal war will land in the end. Talk about liberty! Who could desire more liberty than we, as a race, enjoyed, civilly, religiously, commercially, or in

any sense whatever? The truth is the liberty of the ballot-box was just what the instigators of the foul plot to break up the Union were afraid of. They were not willing even to risk the people of North Carolina with the privilege of ratifying or rejecting the ordinance of secession that pretended to carry them out of the Union.

"Justice awaits the leaders at the hands of an outraged people. The cries of innocent women and children have ascended. The sacrifice of the blood of the youth of the honest poor of the country will soon make its appeal in despite of Jeff. Davis and cabinet. Our brothers and sons are being forced against their wills and consciences into a a cause against the best interests of mankind, to be shot on the field of civil strife.

'To the unhappy that unjustly bleed,
Heaven gives posterity to avenge the deed.'

"We advise you to take warning and put a stop to this wholesale murder. 'There is a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue.' Those whom you brand as cowards are being inspired with a courage that will put your rebel chivalry and boasting to shame. You who are clamoring for war will soon realize what war means. Though the writer of this, with thousands of others, may fall with the wreck, the spirit of our forefathers and the old Government will live and be maintained. This spirit, notwithstanding all that has been done and said, is in the hearts of the people of western Carolina, and it is impossible for us to remain neutral. The leaders have made laws that excuse none but the large slaveholder and a few favorites in office. I know that it is claimed as a military necessity. Just so; no tyrannical act was ever palmed off on a people without a pretext. The chains have been forged for some time, and now they are being fastened upon us inch by inch, step by step. Freemen of the blue mountains of western North Carolina are you willing to hold on and support a government that you never wanted, and cannot maintain itself without making worse than slaves of you? Has ever a people lost their liberties without just such pretexts, stratagems, and deceptions first having been palmed off upon them? Just think of a government which, if successful, will have a border to defend that will keep all the young men of the common class of society in arms from one generation to another, and their parents paying government rent from their own farms to feed them on. Think of the condition that your wives, daughters, and sisters would be placed under. O, my country-

men, let us ponder well the admonitions and warnings of Washington, Webster, Clay, and others of our fathers. Have we not seen enough to convince us where we are being driven to? Have the people realized any of the promises made to them if they would secede and rebel against the best government on earth? Not one single item in the whole catalogue of promises has been realized, and *never* will. Then shall we pursue further the certain destruction of all hope of future happiness and liberty for ourselves and our posterity, for the aggrandizement of rotten and corrupt leaders? Arouse! Arouse! my countrymen. Where there is a will there is a way.

"A SOUTHERN CITIZEN.

"APRIL, 1863."

This address found its way into the hands of many of the leading Union men throughout the western counties, and into some portions of East Tennessee. The Union men throughout the mountain district formed themselves into companies, squads and bands, in order to protect themselves from conscription; and many who had been forced into the army found their way back and joined them.

A crisis had now arrived among the Union men. The details and militia were hunting them down, though the great body of the militia were Union men, and often aided the party; but the details—as a general thing, the worst men in or out of the army—were scouring the country, and often shooting their prisoners without a trial. Something had to be done. The Union men looked upon me as their leader in that section, and of this I was strongly suspected by the rebels. My movements were closely watched.

A kind of council among the Union men was called; a time appointed to meet at some point in my county. The day arrived, and the sheriff, for a blind, made some business with me and conducted me to the appointed place, in the woods of course. Here I was met by many of the best citizens of the country and some eighty conscripts, partly armed.

I was informed that a speech and my counsel in this great emergency were desired by the assemblage. I proceeded with much caution to give them a talk, and advised them to be very careful how they conducted themselves; that it was impossible to remain neutral, and without arms and ammunition we could not defend ourselves in the country, but that I would suffer my tongue to be torn out by the roots,

sooner than advise them to fight against the Union, &c.; to keep out of the way and advise with their friends. I implored them not to commit any depredations on the community; that it would injure the cause and endanger their friends. An arrangement was made for a subsequent meeting of the most trusty Union men in the country. We were waiting and watching for East Tennessee to be relieved. The indications through the *underground* railroad of this event were now quite favorable, according to report.

The reports that had now got into circulation in regard to my written address, and the meeting in the woods, gave my family much uneasiness. My life was daily threatened. The time for the special meeting had now arrived, and it was composed of some of the best citizens of the country. I was delegated to Tennessee. This met the approbation of my best friends and was sanctioned by my family, believing that my life was in great peril.

I left my home and family (Hendersonville, N. C.) the last day of August, 1863; made my way on horse back through the mountains to East Tennessee without much difficulty. On the way I received a letter informing me that my brother with others had gone to Kentucky. After remaining with Union friends and connections in Cocke county, Tennessee, a few days, and learning all that I could pertaining to my object—the Federal troops were now taking possession of East Tennessee—on my way to Knoxville I met with Judge Patterson of Greenville, Tennessee, who introduced me to Colonel Foster. Arrived at Knoxville about the 10th September; reported to Generals Carter and Burnside, and was surprised to learn from them that they knew all about my principles. I gave them all the points and information, so far as I could, in regard to western North Carolina. Here I learned from a soldier (a relative) that my brother was quite unwell, but expected to return to East Tennessee immediately; and I determined to return to Cocke county and await my brother. Before leaving I was presented with authority, signed by Generals Samuel Carter and A. E. Burnside, to raise a regiment of loyal North Carolina volunteers. This, no doubt, was done at the instance of my friends, and I knew that I could raise the men.

On my return to Cocke county, which joins North Carolina, I found several of my neighbors, who had followed me according to previous arrangement. I dispatched several of them with authority to recruit and carry out the plans now set on foot. My object was to get out as many men as

possible and get them organized; and induce the authorities, if possible, to let us return with a sufficient force to hold the country, and thereby give the down-trodden people of my section relief; but my zeal was too great; I was too venturesome. Desirous to give my family information of my movements, and to get my clothes and a lot of bank bills, in order to liquidate some debts in Baltimore, a brave lad, Russell Jones, volunteered his services at my suggestion to make the trip some seventy miles through the mountains. He was mounted, set out with proper instructions, &c., and succeeded in getting through all right; but was arrested on his return with about two thousand dollars bank bills and my best clothes. While this was going on I went to Greenville, Tennessee, and pretty well completed my arrangements in getting the men out; then returned to Cocke county, where I learned, from a party of my men who had come through, the circumstances just related in regard to the arrest of the lad, &c. I at once proceeded to Mr. Campbell's, where I had left a squad of men to guard, or rather watch, a pass in the mountain, and had they discharged their duty, all would have been well. This was on the Tennessee side, within the Federal lines. An infamous scoundrel had betrayed the men. Here I met with Mr. Vol. Jackson, who had fled from Tennessee on the approach of the Federal army. My suspicions were aroused; but knowing that I had charged the men to keep out a watch and give the alarm should anything occur, I felt secure. Mr. Jackson claimed to be my friend; said he came to see me in regard to getting the lad out of jail. I asked what his instructions were. He said he had no particular instructions; that I had better write. I addressed a letter to the authorities at Asheville, stating that my business was legitimate; that I had no desire to hurt any North Carolinian, and to release the boy and send my property. If you will not send my money, as it is but trash in comparison, release the boy; he is but a child and his friends much excited in regard to him, &c. Mr. Jackson took the letter and left immediately. I inquired if the pickets were at their posts on the mountains. "O, yes! all right!" and in a moment the report of fire-arms came from every direction. Mr. Campbell, Charles Jones and myself, ran out of the house, but were completely surrounded. Every man was captured but one, and he made his escape through a shower of lead—one man severely wounded in the head. How they succeeded in getting there without alarm I have yet to learn—rather suspect, from what

I have heard, a woman or two decoyed the pickets. I managed to throw my commission under a log; whether they found it or not I have never been able to learn.

I surrendered as a prisoner of war and asked to be treated as such, and appealed to some of the party who knew me well, but to no purpose. After divesting me of every cent of money, and even my pocket knife, we were then drawn up in a line, and Mr. Campbell and myself bound together with a cord made of split wood. Soon after Mr. Campbell was released from the cord, and I alone bore the fetter to Asheville jail. Here I was incarcerated, within six miles of where I was born and brought up. I could see the hills through the grates of the window on which I was reared and played in my youth; on which rest the remains of my aged parents; and I thought, could they appear and hail to me, and ask "What are you doing there?" it consoles me to know that I could have answered, "I am here for the love of that which you taught me to reverence next to my God—the Union."

At Asheville I was bound with iron fetters and sent to Camp Vance, where I had to lay under heavy frosts without covering, until one bright evening, just when the trees were casting their longest shades, the move of a large bay horse quickened my pulse. In a moment my wife and little son were in full view. I came very near springing out of the lot. "Halt! halt!" fell harshly on my ear. I was permitted to see my wife only in the presence of the officer of the day, and was forbid any private conversation whatever; but I managed to learn from her that the papers that I had sent by the lad were all safe, and that they had no positive evidence against me.

Some weeks after I, with a lot of other *Tories*, were jammed into a box car, without fire or water, and sent to the prison pens at Camp Holmes, near Raleigh; and soon after two of my boys who had been captured were sent in, and I learned from them that many had succeeded in getting through, some captured, some shot, and some fell back into the mountains. I counseled these two men, as I did all others who I knew were safe, to make their escape the first opportunity and go to the Yankees; and the best way to effect this object was to appear as cheerful as possible until a good opportunity offered itself; to die rather than fight against the United States.

From the prison pens at Camp Holmes I was sent to prison at Richmond, Va. Soon after the conscript law

covered my age, and they being "hard up" for soldiers, concluded to make one of me. Of this I was informed, and received the intelligence in a spirit of conformity; not that I intended to raise my hand against the United States, but it gave me hope of escape. I was sent directly to Lee's army under guard, and arrived at Brandy Station just at the time the Yankees took in the majority of General Hoke's brigade; in this my heart rejoiced. Lee immediately fell back on the Rapidan.

I was now being allowed a little liberty in camp, but from continued exposure and confinement, my health was quite feeble; and my whole study was how I should make my escape. I wrote to my wife to cut from the book a map of the State of Virginia, and send it in a letter to me; to have the letter mailed at some distant post office, and to address the letter to —— ——, a confidential friend. It came to hand all right. My wife remarked to me, after I got home, that she knew what I wanted with that map. This letter brought the sad intelligence of the death of my brother, who fled to Kentucky.

The regiment to which I was assigned was ordered on picket near Moton's Ford. I was placed in charge of a corporal, with my mess-mates—two conscripts, with whom I had become quite intimate, and an old soldier. I found from sounding with poles, that the water was too deep to wade, and both sides lined with ice. The early part of the night was very dark, and a drizzling rain was falling. I suggested to my two friends the idea of lashing some rails together as a kind of life-boat. At each of their stated two hours on post, the other was to assist me in fixing the raft. When the corporal and old soldier became weary and slept, we were busily engaged under a bank a few rods from a sink in which they slept. Just as I began to make sure of success, a storm of wind and hail came up and awakened the corporal, who called out, "What are you doing? you have let the fire burn down." "We have been sheltering under some trees," replied one of my comrades. Thus we were disappointed, and the work of demolishing the raft was performed by one, whilst the others made a fire with the rails, in order to conceal our object. The reader will bear in mind that I was still held as a prisoner, but with extended privileges. This night's work and exposure and disappointment prostrated me, and I was sent to hospital at Orange Court House; thence to Richmond, where I remained from January until July following. It was thought at one time

that I would not recover, but in April I got on foot. Here (at Jackson and Winder hospitals) I saw many old acquaintances, and had every facility of corresponding with my friends, without the use of the mails, through furloughed soldiers. The hospitals were frequently over-run with patients. During my six months in these hospitals, I have no doubt that I did the confederate cause more injury than I could have done at the head of my contemplated regiment. Hundreds are now living, many of whom went through the lines, and can testify to the fact that I gave them the points and advised them to go through the lines. Of course I used a great deal of caution in this.

A plan was set on foot by some of my friends, by which they supposed I could be released and sent home. An election was coming off in August for State legislators. I was informed that the Union party of my county was going to run my name secretly, and if they succeeded I was bound to be released and sent home. In order that the reader may fully understand, I will state that at this time there was a regular secret line of communication between Knoxville, Tennessee, and the mountains of western North Carolina, and some portions of my section were being held by the Union men, all about which I was fully apprised. About this time a letter addressed to me by a friend was violated and divulged the plans in regard to the election. In order to relieve my friends from further suspicion of a secret design, I wrote a card stating that "I had not changed my principles in the least; that I was in favor of an election in order to get the voice of the people in regard to a State convention in favor of restoration and peace, and that I was a candidate on these grounds." Instead of appeasing it exasperated.

I had written and sent home a package of letters by a furloughed soldier, (a cousin,) several of which were extorted from my friends, and extracts published in the Henderson *Times*, with comments. I will quote from that paper and italicise the extracts taken from my letters. He commences thus:

"A. H. Jones.—* * * We have felt it to be our duty to notice Mr. Jones before this, but from private personal considerations and former personal intimacy we have foreborne to do so. But we are in a crisis, in peril, in jeopardy. * * American liberty is now an outcast at home and abroad; she seeks an abiding-place in the South. And that liberty may abide with us our army is battling with the minions of

the tyrant, with the hordes of vagabonds gathered from half the nations under heaven. * * * At first led away by his prejudices he formed bad associations, and attempted to organize disloyal men for the invasion of this section under his leadership. * * * He says, *if men could witness what he has they would favor peace on almost any terms, unless they are very demons.* * * * We hope to see more of these letters in time for next week. * * * Let us have the facts. The recipients are known, and may well be suspected of smuggling and concealing disloyal sentiments. * * * Two more of Mr. A. H. Jones' letters have been handed to us. They are as corrupt as it is possible to make them. * * * He says that he *has never yet raised his hand against the government of his choice, and it seems to him that he would sooner die than do so.* * * * He says that *he knows that General Grant has assumed a very strong position, and that the fall of Richmond is only a matter of time.*"

The young man with whom I entrusted the package of some twenty letters took a relapse, and did not deliver the letters in person. This accounts for their exposure. Among them was one addressed to my wife, which was referred to in one of the others. This excited suspicion, and the letter was demanded and refused. I had taken the precaution to write two of the same date, and placed them in the same envelope, for the reason that my children and friends read my letters. One of these was written as an ordinary family letter. The other was strictly forbidden; it contained instructions in regard to my eldest son, whom, I had understood, they were endeavoring to get into the rebel service. I stated in this letter that I would sooner hear of his burial, and gave my wife instructions in certain contingencies. An order was issued at headquarters, Asheville, to arrest my wife and take her to jail, unless she would produce the letter. An officer entered her chamber, accompanied by her * * * with the order, in the presence of three grown daughters, the eldest of whom was insane, and now an inmate of the lunatic asylum, caused, as I shall always believe, by the effects of the hated rebellion. She surrendered the one, but had burned the other. It did not correspond with the one referred to, but there was the date, the handwriting and my signature; it was a puzzle for them. I had instructed my wife, in case there was a raid made into the country, which was expected soon, to apply to the commander and take the family through the lines and let the property go; that I was gaining strength, and that I intended to go through or

perish in the attempt. "Be sure to send Thaddeus off immediately."

Just as I was getting fairly able to walk about, I had notice to appear at hospital headquarters. Suspecting something, I at once destroyed all letters and apers in my possession, except the map of Virginia, which I folded into as small a compass as possible, with a few dollars in gold, and concealed them as near the centre of gravity as possible.

In custody I was sent before the provost marshal, where I was searched for papers, and wher he newspaper articles from which I have quoted—having been cut out and pasted together, with the letters that had been seized—were presented to me. I acknowledged to writing the letters, with the remark that they were private letters, and simply contained my opinions. "I suppose then," said he, "you are a Union man; are you not?" I replied, "I suppose you have asked me for the truth?" "Certainly, sir," said he, rather sharply. I told him that I had always been a constitutional Union man. He hastily writes a committment. "Here, take this man to Castle Thunder; he is a dangerous character." I was then conducted to the prison door, where I was researched, and I began to think my map and gold would "go up," but they did not. This was in July. I was assigned to appartment No. 10—the disloyal room—where I found about one hundred and twenty-five others, of all grades of society. There were about one thousand in all in the different apartments—male and female. I secured my map and money by cutting a hole in the waistband of my pants with a piece of glass I submitted to my fate with as much fortitude as possible; but starvation and the water soon prostrated me again, and I soon became insensible, and was removed to the hospital department of the prison, where my memory, after so long, returned to me. The lice had preyed upon me until the surface of my skin was a solid sore, and the skin cut through on my hips. I must say from this time, one of the surgeons acted with some humanity towards me. Finally I got on foot, and was returned to room No. 10, and, after remaining in Castle Thunder nearly four months, I was sent to the barracks; thence to Petersburg the 8th of November; the 9th was returned to Richmond, and the next morning to the provost marshal's office, where a large package of papers were handed to my special guard, with orders to take special care of me. I was sent to Staunton. Fresh air and exercise aboard the cars, with better rations, had gained me considerable strength.

The regiment to which I had been assigned was at New Market, in the Valley. I knew that a trial before a *drum-head* court martial was pending, and now I doubled my former resolve to make my escape or die, without being court martialed. Preparatory to this end, I divested myself of everything, except what I could wear and my blanket. Between three and four hundred conscripts, deserters, and a few special prisoners, were put on the march for New Market. Being fearful of my strength, and anxious to get as far north as possible, I made an arrangement with one of the guards to ride occasionally, by giving him all the confederate stuff that I had.

The morning of the 17th November found us in a little less than a day's march of New Market. Something had to be done soon. No possible chance offering itself, I determined on a desperate attempt: that was to dash off on the horse, get to the woods, and leave him; but no sooner had I made this resolve, than I found that Early's army was scattered all along on either side of the road. On reaching New Market, the guards were immediately changed. I saw that the officers whose business it was to detail the men were drinking. Sheridan had been pitching in, and everything was in confusion. I caught a chance, and as quick as thought I was among the conscripts, and in a twinkling I applied to one of the conscript guards for permission to step to one side. "All right," said he, "just pass out beyond that brick church." My thoughts were like electricity. Squads of men were being hurried off up the same road we had gone down. This was a crisis with me. Looking round I saw that I could return by way of an alley, and drop in with a squad of men that were being sent off. Dropping in, and keeping as near the centre of the squad as possible, I could not avoid looking back, fearing detection. After making two miles, said I: "Well, boys, I leave you here." "Halloo!" says the officer of the squad, "don't you belong here?" "No, *sir'ee!*" said I, "guess not." Takes out his list; finds his compliment without me. Said he, "All right; I have nothing to do with you."

On the west side, about four hundred yards, near the top of a small mountain, I struck the woods. Just in front of me I discovered an ordnance train. As quick as thought I bore a little to the right, and passed on to the highest point of the mountain. Here I brought my map into requisition. The village on the right, Rhodes' division to my left, and the Little Shenandoah river running round in front.

Very soon I got the position of the picket lines, concealed myself and retrospected until dark. The stars shining brightly and everything under foot very dry, I had to move with great caution, and soon found that it was next to impossible to pass the lines under the circumstances, and retraced my steps to the little mountain, made me a bed of leaves and slept soundly until morning tattoo, the 18th November. I spent this day in making observations, and eat the only cracker I had. The evening was cloudy and drizzling rain. This was a God-send to me. I had selected a mountain across the valley for an object. Night came, and I set out a second time; approached a shoal in the river, the noise of which led me to a shallow place; about midway the river I stumbled over some slick rock, which drew the fire of a sentinel on the bank near where I had gone in at; the flash of the gun lighted the river all round for a moment; but with double care I succeeded in crossing, and had to pass another picket line at the base of the mountain, which was so steep I had to pull up by my hands; some distance up I accidentally started a stone, the noise of which drew the fire of another picket, but I was half up, and soon gained the summit. My course was northwest, in the direction of a large ledge of mountains selected during the day. The camp fires, now in my rear, served me as a guide all the early part of the night. Weak and tired, I moved slowly until about two or three o'clock, by which time it was snowing and I had struck the mountains. My strength failing me, I threw myself across some limbs of a fallen tree top; almost instantly I fell into a kind of stupor, and immediately followed a shiver that brought every nerve into play; my teeth began to rattle; a chill had seized upon me; a thought and an effort to regain my feet, but failed for the moment. "Great God," I involuntarily exclaimed, "am I to perish after all!" After considerable effort, I succeeded in moving off. Daylight, November 19th, found me near a large gap in the mountain; proceeded to it; heard a cavalry horn a little to the right of where I had passed, which served to caution me. To the left in a little valley, I discovered some houses, and proceeded to reconnoiter; refreshments being indispensable with me any longer. From among several homesteads I selected one and ventured in, and to my great comfort found myself in a room heated up by a large stove, and a nice old dutch lady occupying the same. A few words satisfied me that there was no immediate danger, and told the lady that I wanted something to eat;

pointing to my wet blanket and exhibiting a large worsted haversack that was concealed under my coat, (one that my wife had brought me at Camp Vance.) In a minute's time I was seated at the table, knife and fork in hand, the first time now more than a year, to an excellent cold breakfast. My haversack was filled to its utmost capacity, in payment for which I left my blanket. Whilst eating, obtained all the information that I could by asking as few questions as possible. During my short stay here my feet swelled, and it was all that I could do to make a start. The snow by this time had covered the ground to the depth of two or three inches, and I had not gone far until I crossed a road, the sign in which showed that a troop of mounted men had passed, no doubt the same from whence came the sound of the horn that I had heard. I at once struck into the south side of a mountain, immediately in my front, which was very rugged and rocky. For fear of being pursued I walked at least a half mile, stepping from the point of one rock to another that stuck above the snow, in order to evade being tracked. By the time I gained the summit of the mountain the sky was blue, with the exception of an occasional flying cloud. On examing my map I found the road in the valley from whence I had just emerged, and could see from where I stood horsemen traveling the same to and fro. Thankful for the narrow escape I turned my eyes and course northward, and had not proceeded far until I espied a cabin away in the distance. Many winds I was compelled to make before I reached it. After reconnoitering I went in and found a dutch widow and children. "Good evening" said I. "Good eveninct, thir, comt to de fire ant warmt yer thelf." I was not long in finding out their sentiments—Union to the hub—she informed me that some Georgians had killed her son Jake.

It was quite a cold night, and with her assurances I concluded to risk myself by her log fire. Next morning, the 20th, I found that it was impossible for me to travel. The old lady sent for her son-in-law, who kindly assisted me in reaching a log cabin about two miles distant, and provided me with some matches. I spent the evening meditating upon my physical condition. No medicine, nothing to rub my swollen and stiffened limbs. Half reclining, with my body upon the puncheon floor and my head upon a stool; gazing round the walls, canceling these things in my mind, my eyes caught upon some deer's feet sticking in a crack. It reminded me in a moment of a stock cabin, once my fath-

er's, in the mountains of western North Carolina. I thought, O, if I was only like I used to be, how I could scale these mountains. "Necessity is the mother of invention." I broke the bones of the deer's legs and bathed my joints with the oil. Next morning, the 21st, found me improved a little, and concluded to remain; I washed, eat, and bathed my limbs with the deer's oil, and made myself as comfortable as possible.

About twelve o'clock a strange-looking man entered the cabin and handed me a flask of brandy, which I used externally and internally. He informed me all about the country through which I had to pass, &c. It rained all day. At night I bathed as usual, and found myself much better next morning, the 22d, and set out according to directions, and made several miles, taking my time, knowing my strength, and passed the night in a school house, where I eat the last of my provisions. A considerable snow fell during the night.

The morning of the 23d of November I set out and had to pass a settlement and some picket posts in the gaps of the mountains, in order to gain the waters of Lost river. Very heavy mountains to encounter, and the snow stuck fast to the bushes, which gave me much difficulty; but succeeded in gaining the north side, and late in the evening I was passing a defile, between two very rugged mountains, along a small stream. The columns of rock on either side made it impossible to get round. I was cautiously moving down this defile, when just ahead I saw an opening to a sort of valley; a few steps further and I was within thirty paces of a mill, a distillery, and some six or eight cavalry horses hitched; five steps back, and I was out of sight of these. But hold! I heard horses approaching in the direction that I had come; my thoughts were like electricity; it was a life and death case; no possible chance to go forward nor backward; to stand still was to go *up* certain. To my right stood a laurel, and a cedar bush immediately on the brink of the creek bank, about three feet above the water. In a thought I was in the creek, under the roots of the bushes, which concealed me. In a moment more, and the approaching horses passed almost immediately over me. The jar of their feet caused lumps of dirt to fall on me. I remained in that position until I heard the party leave, by which time it was quite dark and cold. Cold and stiff, I struggled some time before I gained the road. I passed down as quickly as possible, and after going about a mile I saw a light off to

my right, and approached near enough to see a woman and two children in a neat cabin. I hailed at the door and asked permission to warm, which was granted. A few words, and I readily learned all about the scouts. "They are Mosby's devils, hunting brandy, conscripts and deserters," said she, in a tone that I never mistook in a woman. I learned many valuable things from her by asking as few questions as possible. She gave me supper, and it being very cold I remained by the fire until the moon rose the morning of the 24th. My object was to pass some springs, formerly a summer resort, before daylight, and make the waters of the South Potomac, near Moorfield C. H., during the day. Late in the evening passed a dead man in blue clothes. I had been in sight of Moorfield from the time I topped the mountain. Notwithstanding I was born and brought up in the valley of the French Broad river, immediately between two of the highest mountains, from actual measurement from the level of the sea, anywhere east of the Rocky mountains, to wit: Mount Pisgah and Mount Mitchel, where, in exploring the latter, Professor Mitchel lost his life by losing his foothold on a bluff—I repeat, notwithstanding all this, I have never seen heavier or more rugged mountains than those about the head-waters of the Little Shenandoah, Lost and South Potomac rivers.

Finding it impossible to pass without going near Moorfield, headquarters for a portion of Mosby's command at that time.

This evening was bitter cold, and I had made a heavy day's travel through the snow without anything to eat. I made for a double cabin within two miles of the village. Dark found me at bey by a very fierce dog, by which I learned there was no one about but some women. Very soon I was at the fire, depending upon the faithful dog to give the alarm should any one approach the house. In less than one minute's time, "bow, wow, wow," the dog went. I stepped out to wait the result. "It's nobody but dad," said a girl. He was quite an old gentleman—a shoemaker. The old lady and three or four strapping girls were sewing, and the old gentleman plying his vocation. The house was regularly visited by the soldiers, as I learned from the following: "Dad, is Bill coming for his shoes to-night? Nance, is Henry coming for his pants to-night? Molly, have you got Jake's shirt done? he said he would be sure to come to-night." "Bow, wow, bow, wow, wow," went the faithful dog again. Everybody at the front door but me, and I out at the back one. A large torchlight approaching soon re-

vealed the mystery. Two women who lived in a cabin hard by, coming from town, came into the house to warm, and the following conversation ensued: "Any soldiers in town to-night, Mrs.?" "No, bless you, they are afraid to stay in town since the Feds. run them out the other day. They go out and camp in the coves at night, and go into town in the daytime." "Wonder if anybody has buried that Swamp the boys killed upon the mountain the other day!" "No, they say not." I asked what they called a Swamp. "Law, don't you know what a Swamp is? Why, it's a home-made Yankee. The boys wounded one and started off with him, the other day, and got him up into the mountain and killed him." This explained all about the dead man that I had seen. At a late hour the two women left. I turned to the old lady and, exhibiting a gold dollar, told her I wanted something to eat. The bargain was made, and before daylight, the morning of the 25th, my breakfast was eaten, and I was in the act of starting, when to my great regret the old man was ready to accompany me to town. I had told them I was going to the village. We started, and had not proceeded far until I frankly told the old fellow that I was not going to town, and he must not say anything about me. I turned to the right, and had not gone far until I came to a small pasture field. He had beaten me there, and had bridled a horse. "What," said I, "going to ride?" "Yes." I again begged him to say nothing about me; that he saw what a condition I was in, and that I was after no harm, and was only trying to save my life, and it was in his hands if he chose to use it. Said he, "I understand you now; you are trying to get north, and you are right. I was fearful you were trying to get my horse, or I should not have started with you. But," continued he, "you must not go so much to the right; go lower down; Mosby's men are camped up in them coves, and will catch you." Daylight was just making its appearance. "See," said he, "that road over there; I would advise you to go quick," pointing the direction for me. I was off, and crossing the road and passing up a steep bluff, barely out of sight, when I heard cavalry coming down the road. Concealing myself, I could see them plain, and it was now light enough for me to see the smoke rising from the coves to my right and in front of me, and could hear voices and the tramp of horses all round. Here I remained all day; at night made a little headway. Next morning, the 26th, I found myself on a mountain nearly opposite Moorfield, and bearing a little to the right, to avoid roads and

plantations, I traveled slowly all day, crossing several roads. At nightfall I struck the main road leading to Romney, as I learned from my map. There was no sign of travel except a strange-looking, to me, foot-print, made by a very broad square-toed shoe, going in the same direction of myself. I ventured to travel this road until a late hour at night, when, from fatigue, hunger and weakness, I was compelled to stop, and after succeeding in raising a fire and making me a bed of split rails to keep me off the wet ground, and not having slept any for three nights, I immediately fell asleep, and when I awoke was in the act of eating a sweet morsel. Sad disappointment; it was a dream. Daylight of the 27th made its appearance, and I fell into the road and traveled about a mile, when all at once large farms were spread out before me, with excellent improvements, situated on the river. I turned to the right and encircled these, winding my way across sharp ridges, now and then coming upon two or three fine horses haltered in the thickets. Continuing to reconnoitre, I hoped to find a safe place to get something to eat. The snow had now quite gone off in the valleys, and it was now about noon, and whilst sitting upon a log on the sunny side of a sharp ridge, near the top, I heard a pack of hounds away in the distance from whence I had come. This reminded me of the chase that I had so often enjoyed in my native mountains. On they sped, sometimes apparently on a trail, at others in full chase. As they came nearer the thought struck me like magic that they were on my trail. I instantly moved to the highest point on the spur of the mountain, from which I could see everything that was going on, and survey the ground over which I had come. I determined to satisfy myself before resorting to any measure to evade them, and in case they made a certain gap of a ridge through which I had passed, which was now in plain view, I would put one of my plans into immediate execution. The suspense was awful, but it did not last long, for in less than a minute's time they were coming through the gap full drive. I was now very much excited, and hurried to a spot where I had passed three fine horses hitched. I loosed the best looking one and mounted him, with a good brush in my hand. On I sped over logs, through the brushwood, until I reached the head of the cove; then turning to the left through a gap in the direction which I was traveling. On I went until I was hemmed in on my right and in front by bluffs. I released the horse and made my way to a spur of a ridge overlooking the road, river, and everything in the

vicinity. Seeing some shocks of corn in a field just below me I remained here until night, and *pressed* four or five ears of corn, which I ate. I had not eaten anything for three days except sassafras buds and roots. Excitement will sometimes cause one to forget their suffering. I never knew what became of the hounds. I shall always believe a man who was hauling wood saw and reported me.

I don't know which party the citizens were hiding their horses from; perhaps both. I traveled all night; passed Romney about three o'clock; took the wrong road; traveled some five miles; saw a light in a house; called in and got a good breakfast. Here I found that my feet were frostbitten. After receiving instructions, the morning of the 28th, I spent the day in making five miles to the residence of a Mr. Haynes. I could not refrain from tears; from the kind treatment of this gentleman and his lady I received all the attention possible. On drawing my old socks the skin cleaved from the flesh. They were anointed and dressed by the good lady. A nice supper, bed and breakfast. With full directions I hobbled off; struck the river at the wire bridge, (destroyed;) found a man in blue ready to set me over, and he informed me that I was entirely out of danger. Passing through Springfield I reached Green Springs, Md., in the evening. I immediately reported to the commander of the post, and requested him to send me to Cumberland, Maryland. "All right," said he; "the cars will be here in a few minutes, and I will send you." The cars arrived in due time, and I soon found myself at the provost marshal's office at Cumberland, the evening of the 29th November, 1864.

I related all the circumstances in my case, at the same time giving good references as to the facts. I remained here three days, and was very kindly treated, especially by Acting Post Adjutant J. H. Rhind. Here I received railroad transportation to Wheeling, Virginia, with instructions to that department, where I was kindly received, and furnished first-class passage, on board the steamer Peerless, to Cincinnati, Ohio. Arrived at Cincinnati December 4th, and reported to Provost Marshal A. C. Jones, who sent me to the Relief Commission. Here I was taken sick, and is it to be wondered at, having been exposed for fifteen months under continual excitement; yea, for nearly four years? The change, so sudden; the liability of eating too much immediately after the next thing to starvation. I was a perfect wreck of humanity; but medical attention and kind treatment, with

clean clothes and good diet, I was soon transposed, as it were, and made anew. Here, among strangers, with my liberties restored, amidst plenty and prosperity, the reflections of these things had a tendency to a redoubled hatred of those black and murderous hearts and treacherous hands which smote the flag of my country—the emblem of liberty—and drove me from my native section and family.

Looking over the Daily Cincinnati *Commercial* early one morning, I read an editorial account of Captain Albert Grant's making his escape from prison, (Columbia, South Carolina;) the thrilling account of his kind treatment the moment he struck the mountains of western North Carolina; getting his shoes mended in a cave; furnished with provisions and pilots through the lines, &c. On investigation I found that he had passed within a few miles of my native village. A few evenings after Mr. Davis, correspondent of the New York *Herald*, addressed a very large assemblage at Mozart Hall, giving an account of his escape from Salisbury prison, North Carolina. In that part of his discourse relative to his kind treatment the moment he struck the mountain counties; the faithfulness of the Union men; their doings; the treatment that their families were receiving from the hands of the rebel details, &c., elated and excited me to such an extent that I could scarcely restrain the emotions of my mind.

From here (Cincinnati) I addressed a letter to the Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, which was referred to General Palmer. Also one, through my friend Dr. W. R. Sevier of East Tennessee, to General Samuel Milligan, giving undoubted reference as to the statements contained in the letter; by which means I obtained a passport and transportation to Knoxville, Tennessee.

Left Cincinnati the first day of March for Knoxville, by way of Seymore, Indiana, Louisville, Kentucky, Nashville and Chattanooga, Tennessee. At the latter place met with Colonel Smoot, of Wilkes county, North Carolina, and near which, in passing through Missionary Ridge, the tunnel fell in on the train, smashing some cars, killing two and wounding several other soldiers. Arrived at Knoxville and met many of my old friends and acquaintances, and from whom I received many pleasing as well as painful accounts of occurrences that had taken place during my absence. Here I learned that the plans which I had set on foot resulted in the organization of two full regiments and the third one started. The third was stationed here, commanded by Col-

onel Kirk; the second at Cumberland Gap, commanded by Colonel Bartlett of Ohio. Among these were the following commissioned officers from my own county; Captain Hamilton, Captain Levi Jones, Lieutenant Anderson, Lieutenant Bradley and Lieutenant Morrison. Besides these regiments hundreds had joined Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio regiments, and hundreds besides in other Government employ.

Scarcely a day passed now without some intelligence from western North Carolina. The details, *alias* horse-thieves, were ravaging the country, distressing the citizens, women and children; many of whom cared neither for king nor country. I have no allusion to the militia.

That the rebellion was now about over was apparent to every well-informed mind. General Thomas was now making a move in the direction of Richmond, and I advanced with a portion of the army to Greenville, Tenn., to await an advance into western North Carolina. Here I came very near going up the "spout" again. The garrison stationed here was ordered away; the Fourth Tennessee and others to take their place, which left a gap of only one day, during which time about a hundred of Vaughn's men pitched into the town with a savage yell, only for which they might have got me; but having learned that "eternal vigilance was the price of liberty," I made my escape with three or four others, and fell back to Lick creek near Bull's Gap, and remained with the army until I got notice that Colonel Kirby, of the Fourth army corps, was ordered to make a feint movement with a brigade on Ashville, and was invited to go along, which I did. I had been interrogated by the officers and asked my opinion in regard to the place and the men. I told them that I knew that many of the men, the majority in my opinion, were Union men, and were held there by force alone; and if they would make a feint attack the Union men would disperse, and the place could be taken without much loss of life on either side. While at Knoxville I had received messages to this effect from reliable men, &c. The arrangement was this: while Kirby feigned an attack to allow all that would to disperse, General Gillum was to come in the rear and capture the place; all of which was effectually accomplished without the loss of a half dozen men on both sides. Just about this time, the news of Lee's surrender was hailed with much rejoicing in the army and throughout the country.

I fell back to Greenville with Colonel Kirby's command,

and after remaining a short time, the North Carolina regiments with some cavalry took quiet possession of the country; when finally, on the first day of May, I reached my home and family after an absence of nearly two years, where I was heartily greeted by all. What a mighty change. Most of the desperate characters had fled from the country on the approach of the Union army, and the refugees returning home; and a strong disposition on the part of many to retaliate for the injuries they had received, and summary punishment being inflicted in many instances, against which I protested; I advised peace and the restoration of law and order in the country. A convention of the Union party was held at a celebration of the Fourth of July in Hendersonville, in which I received the nomination, unanimously, as the candidate to represent the people of Henderson and Transylvania counties in the State convention. Before the people I received nearly eleven votes to one over my opponent, notwithstanding I was pronounced the negro equality candidate in a printed circular. This was done because, in addressing the people on the Fourth, I told them that slavery had played out; that there was no longer a slave on the American continent; and that James Buchanan, Jeff. Davis, Yancy, Rhett & Co. had destroyed the institution under the title of secession, and did not deserve any credit for it from either party; and that it was our duty as a people to use the great lesson that the rebellion had taught us to the best possible advantage in the future, &c.

In the State convention ordinances were passed abrogating secession; involuntary servitude forever abolished, and to prohibit the rebel war debt or any part thereof from ever being paid. Myself and colleagues from the mountain counties, now comprising the seventh congressional district, almost to a man voted for these measures. I prepared and offered a proposition for the protection of and regulating contracts with the freedmen, but it was ruled out by the committee on business for the consideration of the convention.

During the sitting of the convention printed notices were laid upon the desks of the members, stating that there was not the least hope or probability that the congressional test oath would be removed or modified. In consideration of these things, it was proposed by some of the "straightest" Union members, that I announce my name as a candidate for Congress, which I did; and the time being so short as to

render it impossible to canvass the district, I issued a circular setting forth the course that I had pursued before the war, during the war, and after the war; and notwithstanding a circular was issued at Ashville by one of my opponents, J. R. Love, only a few days previous to the election, and scattered throughout the district by his secession emissaries, grossly misrepresenting me, knowing that I could not meet and refute the slanders until the election was over, the result of which stands thus:

A. H. Jones, uncompromising Union	3,486 votes.
Tod R. Caldwell, Esq., claims to be Union	1,688 "
B. S. Gaither, Esq., Union in the outset of the war, but did not *stick;* ex-member of the rebel congress	2,316 "
J. R. Love, Esq., original secessionist, and a rebel colonel	1,619 "
Scattering	300 "

Many Union men went to the polls, intending to vote for me, but declined casting a vote on account of the charge made in Love's circular. The charge, in short, was this: that I had voted in the convention for a proposition to punish all who had been in the rebel service, &c., after they had been pardoned by the President. The object of this was to keep that portion of the Union voters, who had been forced in one way or another into the rebel service, from supporting me, and succeeded to a considerable extent where I was not well known.

From actual calculation it is ascertained that from the twenty counties composing the mountain or seventh congressional district of North Carolina, with the additional county of Wilkes, no less than five thousand seven hundred and ninety white males, from the age of seventeen years and upwards, crossed the lines; three-fourths of which number were in the Federal army, besides one hundred and eighty-three who it is known lost their lives in the effort to get through.

According to the request of many friends, I have given a faithful and simple statement of facts in regard to the course that I have pursued; and occupying the position that I now do, I cannot, consistent with my feelings, close without a word to my constituents.

The war is over, and its results defined. Let all strike hands in friendship, in mutual forbearance. Let us forget the gloomy past. Let the many wounds that have been inflicted be healed. Let us forgive and be forgiven, and once

more unite our efforts in the pursuit of prosperity and happiness. This is due to ourselves, to our posterity, and to our common country.

The great bone of contention is removed, to wit, slavery; and, comparatively speaking, we feel it less than most any other portion of the South, being but proportionally few of the freedmen among us. Towards these it is our duty to be charitable. They had no agency whatever within themselves in bringing on the war, while the very means used to keep them in bondage has been instrumental in their freedom. We cannot reasonably blame them for wanting to be free. It is a boon that all human beings desire, and the fiat has gone forth; the decree is passed and unalterably fixed that the colored race is henceforward and forever free. Had I the power I would not restore slavery. It would be an incubus to the security of the Government, to the advancement of the age, and to the interests of western North Carolina. It seems that the war had to come; it is now over; let us abide its results as one of the great events in God's providence.

I took the grounds in my circular in favor of colonization at the earliest practicable period, but I now believe if colonization ever takes place it will be a voluntary thing on the part of the colored race; and this is not a probable result for years to come, if ever. Hence it is the duty of the State to provide laws to secure them in person, property and lawful pursuits, and to encourage them to honesty, industry and morality.

I have no doubt that in a few years the revolution, though an awful shock, will prove beneficial individually and nationally. It will develop a greater energy in our people, unless, as is too often the case according to history, the victorious party oppress the conquered to too great an extent. We hope and believe it will be otherwise with the United States, especially those portions of the South which have shown such a strong devotion to the Government. Speaking the same language, professing the same religion, and associated in the hallowed memories of the past, it would be unmanly and unchristian to exhibit toward us any other than a generous spirit and kind treatment. An unforgiving disposition is an indication of a low and brutal nature. "To err, is human; to forgive, divine."

But for those who have been leading the rebellion, occupying high positions, military and civil, with all the vindictiveness and ingenuity that could be brought to bear to

break up the Union for four years, now to come in and occupy the most responsible positions in the Government, is unreasonable and ought not to be expected; especially those who plied their vocations to this end while holding offices in the Government of the United States previous to the war.

Western North Carolina, in many respects, is a peculiar and interesting section of country. It is bounded on the north by East Tennessee and southwestern Virginia; on the west by East Tennessee; on the south by northern Georgia and South Carolina. Occupying the highest altitude of any section east of the Rocky mountains—the blue ridge running through it from a southwest in a northeast direction—it is noted as having the purest atmosphere and free-stone water in the world. From its mountains spring the headwaters of the Kanawha, Dan, Cape Fear, Great Pedee, Wateree, Broad, Saluda, Savannah, Chattahoochee, Coosa and Tennessee rivers. Through it pass too well-graded and excellent turnpike roads, one starting at Greenville, Tennessee, running south *via* Paint Rock, Warm Springs, Asheville and Hendersonville, branching and crossing Saluda and Jones' Gaps into South Carolina; the other, starting at the head of the railroad at Morganton, passing west by Marion through Swananoah Gap *via* Asheville, Waynesville, Webster, Franklin, and Murphy, into Tennessee and Georgia.

In this section there is some of the most interesting natural scenery to be found on the continent; among which are Paint Rock, Cæsar's Head, and Chimney Rock; near the last named leaps, from near the summit of a mountain apparently of solid rock, a clear stream of water, making at one bound a distance of some two hundred feet perpendicular. Cascades are quite numerous, and the water power in this mountain section of country cannot be surpassed in the world. Iron ore abounds in some localities, and other valuable minerals have been discovered. The soil, composed of every variety, is adapted to the culture of corn, rye, oats, buckwheat, grasses, and fruits, particularly apples. Irish potatoes and cabbage are raised to great perfection. Fair wheat is raised in some counties.

The principal source of income was from the raising of stock. Previous to the war immense herds of cattle roamed over the mountains, grazing upon the wild range, which were driven to the markets of South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia, during the fall and winter. The terminus of no less than five railroads are pointing in the direction of this

mountain country, to wit: from Morriston, Tennessee; Morganton, North Carolina; Cherryville, North Carolina; Spartanburg, South Carolina; and Greenville, South Carolina; the extension of some of which was under contract and their construction under way previous to the war; all of which now lie dormant. Here is a grand opening for capitalists, which no doubt will be seized upon at an early day. The freedman would be glad to get employment, even at low wages, to work on these roads. It would at once circulate money in the country, stimulate the farmer, the mechanic, and infuse vigor into all departments and pursuits of life.

In view of these reasonable calculations, I implore my fellow-citizens to take courage and unite their efforts in building up the country. Repair your farms; everything that sustains life comes from the ground—the farm; sow your seed, be cheerful and charitable. Encourage the restoration of your colleges, academies, and common schools, and everything that tends to the promotion and happiness of our common country, and all will be well. The pursuit of peace, prosperity, and happiness, is the duty of man. May the great God of nations, the King of kings, rest and abide with us as a people and as a nation, is the earnest petition of your humble servant,

ALEXANDER H. JONES.

December, 1865.

P. S.—January the 5th, 1866. In pursuance of my duty to a loyal constituency, and in justice to myself, I am at the capital of the nation "KNOCKING AT THE DOOR."

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